(c) whether any investigation is being done into such alleged violations of law; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. C. P. THAKUR): (a) to (b) Yes, Sir. Greenpeace have claimed that out of 6 food products sold in the country which were sent for testing to an independent laboratory abroad, genetically engineered material was detected in two of the products. Therefore it is alleged that the import and sale of these products is in violation of the Rules for handling Hazardous Micro organisms and Genetically Modified organisms, 1989, under the Environmental Protection Act, which stipulates that manufacture, Use, Import, Export and storage of these micro organisms cannot be undertaken without the approval of the Genetic Engineering Approval Committee (GEAC), a statutory body set up under the Ministry of Environment and Forests.

(c) and (d) Information received from the Ministry of Environment and Forests indicates that the GEAC has not accorded approval for import of any genetically modified food in the country.

Molecular probes and analytical methods for detecting, Genetically Engineered ingredients in food are not available in the country. Therefore the Department of Biotechnology has been requested by the Ministry of Environment and Forests to suggest measures for building capabilities for developing probes and analytical methods and to identify institutions/laboratories which can take up this work.

New Health Policy

29. SHRI RUMANDLA RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering to propose a New Health Policy;

(b) if so, whether the policy will replace the 1983 document and

proposes the levy of "user charges" on people living above the poverty line;

(c) if so, by when the legislation in this regard is likely to be introduced; and

(d) what are the main points of the new policy?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. C.P. THAKUR): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. An exercise is currently underway for revising the National Health Policy 1983. Various alternatives including levy of user charges are proposed to be examines.

(c) Upon finalisation of the National Health Policy, the same will be circulated to States/UTs., for comments and finally placed before cabinet for approval.

(d) The Revised National Health Policy will envisage to focus on various determinants which have an impact on the health status of the people like financial resources, equity, considerations, role of States, private sector, human resource development and other issues such as medical research, disease surveillance, role of IEC, NGOs, population stabilisation, etc.

Constitution of Blood Transfusion Councils

30. SHRI K.C. KONDAIAH: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the Supreme Court has directed the Central and State Governments to constitute Blood Transfusion Councils in all the States;

(b) if so, the States which have, so far, constituted Blood Transfusion Councils;

(c) whether Government and NACO are funding these Councils;

(d) whether Karnataka has constituted the above Council; and

(e) if not, whether Government will assure grants to Karnataka to constitute the above Council?